



PRESS RELEASE LEGISLATIVE LGBTQ+ CAUCUS

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Oregonians Should Get to Vote on Equal Rights

As Pride Month begins, Senate Republicans are blocking the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) Constitutional Referral, SJR 33, which would protect same-sex marriage and abortion rights in Oregon's Constitution

SALEM, Ore - Oregon's LGBTQ+ Caucus is fighting to ensure every Oregonian has the right to make deeply personal decisions free of interference from politicians. **SJR 33, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) Constitutional Referral, will give Oregon voters the opportunity to enshrine that right into our constitution**, but it is being held up as Senate Republicans refuse to show up and do their jobs for over a month now.

In the wake of the *Dobbs* decision, anti-freedom and anti-LGBTQIA+ politicians are threatening the rights and freedoms of women and LGBTQIA+ Americans, including the rights to marry who they love, decide when and how to start a family, express their identities, and receive necessary, life-saving medical care. The states most at risk of rolling back rights and freedoms are those without constitutional protections.

Oregon Democrats introduced the ERA referral to give Oregon voters the opportunity to affirm their values and protect their rights. If passed by voters in 2024, ERA would:

- Protect equal rights by updating current equality language in the Oregon Constitution to include: sexual orientation, gender identity, and the right to make your own decisions about your reproductive health and gender-related health care, including abortion and gender-affirming care.
- Remove Oregon's ban on same-gender marriage from the Constitution.

Every year, Oregon Republicans introduce a slate of anti-LGBTQIA+ and anti-abortion bills. Without the federal protection offered by *Roe v Wade* and the underlying right to privacy, this proposed update to the Constitution is necessary to protect Oregonians from future attempts to undermine their rights.

Unfortunately, unless Senate Republicans show up to work, Oregon voters may not get the opportunity to vote on these fundamental rights and freedoms.

“By standing in the way of this opportunity for voters to protect equal rights, Oregon Senate Republicans are showing how out-of-touch their priorities have become. Oregonians support the rights of women and LGBTQIA+ Oregonians, as they showed by electing Democrats to represent them in Salem,” **said [Representative Travis Nelson](#)** (D-N & NE Portland).

“In the face of this threat and anti-LGBTQIA+, anti-abortion attacks around the country, this is our moment to stand up and say ‘not in Oregon’,” **added [Representative Ben Bowman](#)** (D-Tigard, Metzger & S Beaverton). “The people deserve to weigh in on these important issues, and a handful of Republican Senators should not get to decide on these fundamental rights.”

“SJR 33 is about freedom and hope. It puts the power in the hands of Oregonians to decide whether we make our state a healthier, safer, and more just place for everyone. This is Oregon’s opportunity to affirm that in our state we are free to pursue our own happiness, free to marry who we love, be who we are, and to control our own bodies,” **said [Senate Majority Leader Kate Lieber](#)** (D-Beaverton & SW Portland). “Senate Republicans need to show up for work and give the people of Oregon the opportunity to vote and make Oregon a beacon of hope.”

[Senator Lieber spoke](#) about the importance of Pride Month and her personal stake in the fight for equal rights on the floor of the Oregon Senate today.

“Pride is a time to celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community and honor those who have paved the way,” **stated [Representative Dacia Grayber](#)** (D-SW Portland & E Beaverton).

“Unfortunately, this is a challenging moment in the fight for freedom in this country. We are seeing attacks on the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community across the United States, and SJR 33 would make sure these attacks don’t reach Oregon.”

“My relationship of over 30 years and my marriage since 2003 deserves to be affirmed. Imagine how you would feel if your right to marriage and receive the same benefits were taken away? We have the power to stop that and protect LGBTQIA+ communities across the state through SJR 33. It’s time we give Oregonians the opportunity to decide,” **said [Representative Rob Nosse](#)** (D-Portland), an openly gay man and proud grandfather.

SJR 33 passed the Senate Committee on Rules on April 27th. It was scheduled for a Second Reading on the Senate Floor when the Senate Republicans began their unconstitutional walkout.

Oregonians overwhelmingly support the rights and protections proposed by the ERA Constitutional Referral.

- 7 in 10 Oregonians believe abortion should be legal in all or most cases, and 4 in 5 Oregonians want no government interference in the decision.
- 65% of Oregonians believe all people should have access to the health care they need, regardless of gender
- 65% of voters are more likely to vote yes on an amendment that includes protections for same-gender marriage, and a majority would be more likely to vote yes if it includes protections for gender identity or expression, as well.

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